

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 123190
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-11 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00
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O P 152023Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE PRIORITY
USINT HAVANA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ACCRA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY 0308
JCS WASHDC PRIORITY 0257
USICA WASHDC PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN PRIORITY
CINCLANT NORFOLK PRIORITY
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PAGE 02 STATE 123190

CINCUSAFE WIESBADEN PRIORITY
DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
CINCMAC ILL PRIORITY
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII PRIORITY 0304

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E.O. 11652: N/A

AGS:MOPS, PINS, CG, CASC

SUBJ: UPI REPORT THAT STATE DEPARTMENT CONFIRMS REBEL
CLAIM OF CAPTURING KOLWEZI AND MUTSHATSHA

REF: KINSHASA 4777

1. UPI, IN MAY 15 REPORT HEADLINED QUOTE STATE DEPARTMENT
CONFIRMS REBEL CAPTURE OF KOLWEZI AND MUTSHATSHA UNQUOTE
AS FOLLOWS:

KINSHASA, ZAIRE (UPI) -- ZAIRE CHARGES CUBAN TROOPS ARE
HEADING A NEW INVASION OF ITS COPPER-RICH SHABA PROVINCE
BY ABOUT 4,000 EXILED REBELS WHO ALSO HAVE BACKING FROM
THE SOVIET UNION, LIBYA AND ALGERIA.

IN WASHINGTON, A STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL CONFIRMED REBEL
CLAIMS THAT THEY HAD TAKEN KOLWEZI, THE KEY MINING CITY
IN THE PROVINCE FORMERLY KNOWN AS KATANGA, AND MUTSHATSHA,
ANOTHER TOWN 63 MILES TO THE WEST.

THE OFFICIAL AZAP NEWS AGENCY CHARGED SUNDAY THAT WHILE
THE BACKBONE OF THE INVADING FORCES WERE KATANGESE EXILES
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PAGE 03 STATE 123190

LIVING IN ANGOLA, THE COLUMN THAT ATTACKED MUTSHATSHA IN-
CLUDED "WHITES WHO HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS CUBANS."

AZAP SAID, HOWEVER, THE ATTACK ON MUTSHATSHA HAD BEEN RE-
PULSED IN A 2 1/2 HOUR BATTLE WITH THE AID OF ZAIRIAN
FRENCH-MADE MIRAGE FIGHTER-BOMBERS.

IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS SAID
SUNDAY FIGHTING WAS STILL RAGING IN THE AREA.

THE KATAGANS ARE THE SAME FORCE THAT FOUGHT IN VAIN FOR
AN INDEPENDENT KATANGA AFTER ZAIRE ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE
FROM BELGIUM IN 1960 AND AGAIN LAST YEAR.

2. WE DO NOT KNOW SOURCE OF "CONFORMATION" AND HAVE
PREPARED FOLLOWING GUIDANCE FOR NOON PRESS BRIEFING MAY 15
WHICH WE WILL SEEK TO GET INTO RECORD.

QUESTION: "THERE IS A WIRE SERVICE REPORT THAT A STATE
DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL CONFIRMED REBEL CLAIMS THAT THEY
HAD TAKEN KOLWEZI AND MUTSHATSHA".

ANSWER: "WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A VERY REMOTE AREA AND A BATTLE SITUATION THAT IS BY NO MEANS CLEAR. ACCORDINGLY, NO STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL WAS IN A POSITION TO CONFIRM DETAILS OF THE MILITARY SITUATION, AND I AM NOT NOW ABLE TO DO SO. I WILL CALL TO YOUR ATTENTION A STATEMENT YESTERDAY BY THE ZAIRIAN NEWS AGENCY THAT THE REBELS HAD BEEN REPULSED FROM THE TOWN OF MUTSHATSHA TOWARD THE ZAMBIAN FRONTIER AND WILL NOTE THAT WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THE VERACITY OF THIS STATEMENT."

3. WE WILL SEND BY SEPTTEL MORE EXTENSIVE GUIDANCE NOW UNDER PREPARATION. VANCE

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